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Bureau of Workforce Programs/Transformation (BWP/BWT)
Policy Issuance (PI): 06-33, Change 5

Date: December 17, 2009

To: Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) Directors

From: Liza Estlund Olson, Director, Bureau of Workforce Transformation
(**SIGNED**)

Subject: Supportive Services

Programs Affected: Jobs, Education, and Training (JET)

Rescissions: PI 01-40, and subsequent changes

Background: This policy change updates guidelines regarding the provision of JET supportive services to align with recent changes to the One Stop Management Information System (OSMIS) and to remove reference to populations that may no longer be served with JET funds.

Policy: Enabling workers to acquire the skills necessary to succeed in today's 21st century knowledge-based economy is central to Michigan's strategy for economic transformation and is the foundation for the Governor's No Worker Left Behind (NWLB) initiative. The NWLB initiative aligns all federal workforce dollars used for worker training into a unified workforce development strategy.

MWAs are charged with managing payment of supportive services and are responsible for ensuring that the provision of supportive services is appropriate, with proper documentation on file. Supportive services are to be provided as appropriate through the first 180 days of a participant's

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employment (the 180-day job retention period). MWAs shall respond in a timely manner when supportive services are requested. In an emergency situation, meaning a situation in which the participant would lose their current employment without immediate support from the MWA, MWAs are to respond within 24 hours in order to prevent the loss of employment. The MWAs and the Department of Human Services (DHS) are to locally coordinate supportive service payments to ensure that expenditure limitations are not exceeded. Supportive services in categories with monetary limits are to be recorded on the OSMIS.

The DHS may pay for employment-related supportive services for Family Independence Program (FIP) recipients who are enrolled in JET when both the DHS and the MWA agree that it is in the customer's best interest to have the DHS issue the supportive service payment. DHS and MWA staff should locally determine when and under what circumstances this should occur.

As stated above, supportive services are to be provided as appropriate through the first 180 days of a participant's employment (the 180-day job retention period). Please note that this policy also applies to individuals whose FIP case closes due to income prior to the end of the 180-day retention period. JET participants receiving FIP payments beyond the 180-day retention period may be provided supportive services at the MWA's discretion and funding availability. However, please note that, as stated further in this policy, after the 180-day retention period has been completed, public transportation allowances or private automobile mileage reimbursement may only continue to be provided to those participants who are **enrolled in education or training activities**.

If a participant relocates and begins receiving services from a new MWA, the participant is to receive supportive services from the MWA that covers the area into which they have moved. Monetary maximums on supportive services apply to an individual's total participation time in the JET program. Maximums may not be reset if a participant begins receiving services from a new MWA. Supportive services provided to date in categories with monetary limits may be located on the OSMIS.

The OSMIS will provide a warning when a supportive service category reaches the participant's yearly or lifetime limit. The following supportive services are required to be entered into the OSMIS:

- Automobile purchase (\$2000/lifetime limit)
- Automobile repair (\$900/12-month limit)
- Clothing allowance (\$500/12-month limit)
- Relocation expenses (\$1500/limit per move)
- Transitional supportive services (\$200/12-month limit)

MWAs are not to use funds to pay fines or penalties, such as those associated with a driver's license reinstatement. Also, funding may not be used to pay any fees associated with enrolling a child in daycare.

All of the following supportive services may be provided to JET participants, in accordance with all applicable limitations stipulated in this policy.

Transportation Allowances

Allowances for public transportation or private automobile mileage reimbursement may be provided for all allowable activities under JET, up to and until, the participant completes a 180-day retention period. After the 180-day retention period has been completed, public transportation allowances or private automobile mileage reimbursement may only continue to be provided to those participants who are **enrolled in education or training activities**.

Transportation allowances include traveling to and from the participant's home to a job interview, job site, potential job site, childcare provider, education or training facility, community service site, work experience site, or MWA/service provider.

Compensation for transportation is the actual cost for public transportation or not less than 20 cents per mile and not more than 40 cents per mile for the use of a private automobile. MWAs are to establish the rate at which participants will be reimbursed for use of a private automobile based on funding availability and local gasoline rates.

Payment of a flat rate is allowed, but the rate must be based on public transit costs or actual miles. In a two-parent family, each parent is eligible to receive a transportation allowance if each parent is contributing towards meeting the case's work participation requirement and has the need for separate transportation.

Volunteer drivers may be reimbursed at the same rate that DHS volunteer drivers are reimbursed. The MWAs should use the current DHS rate as a guide. Reimbursement for volunteer mileage may not exceed the DHS's maximum allowable rate.

Automobile Purchase

Up to \$2000 may be authorized toward the purchase of an automobile if it will be used as the participant's primary means of transportation for employment-related activities, even if public transportation is available. In a two-parent family, each parent who is contributing towards meeting the case's work participation requirement may be eligible to receive up to \$2000 towards the purchase of an automobile, if the funding is directed towards separate automobiles, and the family has the need for separate transportation. Payment may be authorized for a licensed mechanic's inspection in addition to the \$2000 automobile purchase authorization. Automobile purchase is limited to once in a client's lifetime.

To prevent a misappropriation of funds, the automobile must be registered and insured in the name of a member of the eligible family.

For purposes of this policy, a member of the eligible family is defined as any adult who is included in the FIP grant.

Automobile Repairs

Up to \$900 in automobile repairs may be authorized per participant in any 12-month period for an automobile that is his or her primary means of transportation for employment-related activities, even if public transportation is available. In a two-parent family, each parent who is contributing towards meeting the case's work participation requirement may be eligible to receive up to \$900 towards the repair of an automobile, if the funding is directed towards separate automobiles for each parent, and the automobiles are used as the primary means of transportation for employment-related activities.

To prevent a misappropriation of funds, the automobile must be registered and insured in the name of a member of the eligible family. For purposes of this policy, a member of the eligible family is defined as any adult who is receiving assistance and included in the FIP grant. Payment may be authorized for a licensed mechanic's repair estimate in addition to the \$900 automobile repair authorization.

Clothing

Clothing as required for participants assigned to work projects and as needed for employment may be provided. Allowable items include clothing for interviews, work gloves, work boots, work shoes, hard hats, personal safety items, protective/special clothing, uniforms, and other clothing as needed to participate in training and/or clothing that is considered to be "job appropriate." A maximum of \$500 in clothing supportive services may be provided to each participant per 12-month period. In a two-parent family, each parent who is contributing towards meeting the case's work participation requirement is eligible. The MWA may also determine the need for the replacement of previously authorized clothing.

Relocation Allowance

A relocation allowance for participants who have obtained verified employment at a location outside commuting distance from their home may be provided. Allowable relocation expenses include pre-location expenses (coordination of details of the move beforehand, as well as the actual moving plan); trailer or truck rental; compensation for persons assisting in the move; mileage allowances; rental of moving equipment, such as dollies; security deposit and payment of the first month's rent at the new location; and any other expense of the move determined as necessary by the MWA. Moving expenses are limited to \$1500 per participant per move. In two-parent families, both parents are eligible if they both obtain employment that requires relocation.

Non-DHS Employment-Related Medical Expenses

Certain services, which are not defined as medical services by the DHS, may be needed to overcome barriers to employment or training, and are allowable supportive service expenses. These services may include:

- Employment-related photocopies.
- The completion of a DHS Medical Needs form by a Medical Doctor (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) certifying that, based on previous medical records or a recent medical examination, the client is able (or unable) to participate in employment-related activities; and whether or not there are limitations or restrictions on the types of activities in which the participant may be engaged.
- An employment or training-related general medical or physical examination by an MD or DO (including the completion of a DHS Medical Needs form).
- Employment-related immunizations and tests required as an employment or training condition (i.e., drug testing or vaccinations).

JET supportive services may be used for dental services that are not covered under Medicaid, another health insurance plan, or by a community public health agency that normally covers medical and/or dental services for the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of physical or mental diseases.

MWAs have the discretion to determine the types of dental services that are necessary and appropriate for employment. To access information about the types of dental services that are covered under Medicaid, MWAs may either contact a local Medicaid provider or e-mail Ms. Chris Farrell, Medicaid Dental Policy Specialist, Michigan Department of Community Health at farrellc@michigan.gov.

JET Transitional Supportive Services

Transitional supportive services are cash payments intended to be used by the participant to cover miscellaneous employment-related expenses not normally covered by regular supportive services. Examples of such expenses include, but are not limited to, personal care services (i.e., barber services); regular car maintenance (i.e., oil changes, fluid refills); industry-specific periodicals; etc. Transitional support payments may not exceed \$200 in total per participant during a 12-month period.

Additional One Time, Work-Related Expense

At the discretion of the MWA, other one time/non-continuing work-related expenses may be provided to enable individuals to participate in activities to seek, obtain, and retain employment. Examples of one time, work-related

expenses include payments for professional license fees (auto trade certification, etc.), the purchase of professional tools, business start-up expenses, etc.

Action: MWA officials shall take appropriate action to comply with this policy.

Inquiries: Questions regarding this policy issuance should be directed to your Welfare Reform state coordinator.

The information contained in this policy issuance will be made available in alternative format (large type, audio tape, etc.) upon special request received by this office.

Expiration

Date: Continuing

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